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# THE AMERICAN BLIND SPOT

*The Failure of the Volunteer System as Shown  
in Our Military History*

BY  
H. C. WASHBURN



*"None are so blind as those who will not see"*

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## PREFACE

The present essay was written in December, 1915, and with minor changes was published in the United States Naval Institute Proceedings for January 1917. Some of the material, in condensed form, has been used in various ways by the Universal Military Training League, the Maryland League for National Defense, the American Defense Society, and the National Security League, and has been given in lectures before the Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York and in the District of Columbia. The thanks of the author are due to those societies which have ordered copies of the book in advance.

Indebtedness should also be acknowledged to the authorities mentioned in the essay, and to Mr. Frederic L. Huidekoper, author of "The Military Unpreparedness of the United States," whose exhaustive and accurate references have been of service in the testing of facts.

Acknowledgment is also due to Hon. Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy; to many officers of the Army and Navy; to the presidents and secretaries of preparedness societies; to Commander J. W. Greenslade, United States Navy, Secretary and Treasurer of the United States Naval Institute and the Board of Control of that organization; to Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, for his encouragement and assistance in placing the essay before the public in book form.

As the book goes to press, problems of war preparation confront the United States which emphasize a thousandfold the need of President Wilson's policy of "universal liability to service." These problems, the greatest of which is the dangerous food situation in our own country, demand with the clear and peremptory call of reason: "The United States *must* have universal military service." In the greatest crisis that has ever confronted the nation President Wilson in his conception of military policy has risen to the height of vision shown by Washington and Lincoln. The American people did not heed Washington's advice, and they were mortally slow to follow Lincoln's call. Will they listen to Wilson? Will they perpetuate the crime of the volunteer system and keep the mad policy for all time?

I. C. WASHBURN,  
Annapolis, April 20, 1917.

*A. H. H.*



## **THE AMERICAN BLIND SPOT**





## INTRODUCTION

In the following article, a brief is held for the growing conviction among Americans that our military and naval policy, as summed up in the word "preparedness," needs not only to be enlarged, but revised; not only increased in the number of *personnel* and the amount of *matériel*, but reorganized, reconstructed, "built up anew." It is contended, and the contention is based on the facts of American military and naval history, that our old way of doing things, where the army and the navy are concerned, is not necessarily the best way; that it may be necessary not only to pour new wine into old bottles, but to make new bottles; and that if this be true, there is no use in shirking the unpleasant argument that American military policy in the past has been fundamentally unsound and false.

The writer makes no claim to originality in maintaining that the American belief in the efficacy of our traditional military policy of voluntary service, still wide-spread but gradually waning, is based on illusions and on misinterpretation of the real factors of our qualified successes in war; that the *real* factors of our ultimate success or escape from disaster in all our wars, being factors unseen by the great majority of the people, have conspired to create an American military blind spot in the national vision; that until this blind spot can be eradicated by thorough education of the people in their *true* military history, the United States cannot hope to be prepared for war or against war; and that compulsory military training is the only true solution for American problems of "preparedness."

It must be recognized, since it is indeed obvious, that a large number of Americans are sincerely opposed, by tradition and present conviction, to the very thought of compulsory military training and service. The very word "compulsory," in their minds, is virtually synonymous with conscription and militarism, both terms of reproach and anathema when regarded from the supposed European point of view. But this same word "compulsory" conjures up no bogey when it is used in connection with taxation, police regulation, sanitary and pure food laws, or education. Par-

ents who are opposed to sending their children to school may raise the cry of liberty of the citizen, but this cry falls on deaf ears, and these parents are *compelled* to give their children the privilege of education. The children, in their turn, are *compelled* to go to school, whether they desire to go or not; they are not only not consulted, and given no choice in the matter, but when they seek to avoid their schooling, they are arrested for truancy. On the other hand, grown-up citizens who seek to evade the duty of military education, of learning to defend their country, are allowed to evade this duty at will, and grown-up citizens who earnestly desire to undergo military training without leaving their trades or their business pursuits, face difficulties which to the great majority of them are insurmountable. Only a mere handful can spare the time to attend even one session of a training camp, where the training, however beneficial, is not and cannot be thorough. This is a true of naval training cruises as of army training camps; both alike are excellent *so far as they go*, but they merely scratch the surface of the problem.

Worse than all this failure to be thorough is the demoralizing influence of knowing that only a few men are being trained, whereas millions are either shirking the training or are unable to take advantage of it; and that in any event, no man will be compelled to go to war unless he happens to have joined the army, the navy, the marine corps, or the nationalized militia. *Such a state of affairs puts a terrific premium on patriotism.* It always has, and it always will. The logical human question will not down, and cannot be intelligently avoided: "If I go to serve my country, *why should Smith and Jones and Brown not go also?*"

Why not, indeed?

Some day this question will be answered once and for all. It has already been answered by Thomas Jefferson and by Abraham Lincoln, as will hereinafter be shown. Their answer, and the answer of Great Britain's experience in the present war, is universal compulsory military service; whether that service be fighting in the trenches or making munitions, driving an ambulance or gathering the nation's crops, pounding a typewriter or commanding the Atlantic fleet is a matter of fitness for the work to be done, a matter of detail. For we are not living in the age of Jefferson or the age of Lincoln; we are living in an age when *a whole nation goes to war.*

To say that in the course of time the United States will adopt compulsory military training and compulsory military service,

both for the army and the navy, sounds like a bold prediction in 1917; in 1930, or even in 1920, it may not sound so bold. Whoever considers this prediction as rash is requested to examine the following different ways in which it may be stated:

1. In time, the American people will apply their business ability and their genius for business organization to military and naval affairs.

2. In time, the United States will abandon the policy it has long shared with Great Britain and China—the only other nations of importance which, in time of peace maintain expensive professional soldiers, but in time of war resort to volunteers who must be trained after war begins.

3. In time, the United States will abandon a military policy which is both initially and ultimately the most costly, both in treasure and in blood, that could be devised, and which has had terrible, though forgotten, results in all our wars.

4. In time, American democracy will find its most valuable and its truest expression in the training of all its able-bodied male citizens, the rich and the poor side by side, to defend and uphold the honor, the interests and the safety of the nation.

5. In time, the warning of Washington, the insight of Lincoln, and the prophetic advice of Jefferson will be at last understood, appreciated and vindicated.

Why is universal military training and service an accepted order of things in France, which has the most democratic army in the world, and in Australia, the newest of modern democracies? Is it accepted in these countries as an evil born of necessity, or as a great benefit never to be foregone, a splendid force making for thorough democracy and national unity, national intelligence, and national physique? Are there any other reasons why these nations approve of the *compulsory* part of the service with the colors? Yes. For one thing, a necessary burden is shared by all who are capable of sharing it, just as taxation is shared by all who are capable of sharing it. [When a burden is shared by all, it ceases to be a burden, or it comes as near ceasing to be a burden as anything can come in human affairs.] For another thing, it is the only way to reach the slackers, the lazy men, the men of soft lives, and the cowards; it not only reaches them, but it makes men of them, if anything can. And again, it makes plain what would otherwise not be plain to hundreds of thousands: *the duty of military service inherent in citizenship.*

## FLINT-LOCK AND FEUDAL POLICY

The militia and volunteer system is an anachronism. It will in the course of time be relegated to the status of other by-gones, and will assume the sentimental and historical interest of flint-lock muskets. It comes down to us from the time of flint-lock muskets.

The professional soldier system (curiously antagonistic, yet curiously allied to the volunteer system) is another anachronism. It comes down to us from an even more distant period, the ancient and mediæval period, the feudal period. Even at that, it is an inferior aspect of feudal military customs, since it harks back to hireling or mercenary troops, rather than to feudal levies called out by the king, and serving as a performance of duty to an over-lord. This is not saying that the modern professional soldier is a hireling or a mercenary in the connoted meaning of these words; but it is saying that military service *in its highest form* is not something to be paid for, nor yet a matter of choice, but is the duty of a citizen to the nation.

## THE NEED FOR OFFICERS

Professional officers have been indispensable to all great nations throughout history, and they are to-day increasingly valuable, in direct ratio to the increasing complexities of scientific warfare. This is admitted even by those who uphold the voluntary system of raising armies. If it is objected that these professional officers are paid for their services, the answer is that they are not paid to fight, but to train and lead fighters, and to educate other leaders. And it may be added that only a sufficient number of officers should be paid, or professional, since the largest possible number of officers should serve for a required term with the colors after serving in the ranks as a duty, and after being promoted therefrom. Only those officers who devote their *whole lives* to the military and naval professions *are capable of organizing ultimate safeguards for the nation*. For this life service the nation owes them a living in the same way that it owes any federal servant a living. Their only true reward is honor due to self-sacrifice, which they offer in peace if not in war; the least the nation can do is to give them maintenance, both in active service and in retirement.

## "COMPULSION" LAUGHABLE TO PATRIOTS

Every American citizen worth his salt should rejoice to have the *opportunity* to receive thorough training as a soldier or a sailor

serving with the colors, provided, most especially, that *all other* able-bodied citizens, at a certain age, are called upon, even if it be by lot, to serve with the colors. This opportunity can be given to the poor man, or the man of limited means, only by a law establishing compulsory military training. Under such a law, his family must be provided for while he is in service, and his employer must be forced to continue his employment when he returns from service.

The only compulsion in universal training and service, speaking strictly and honestly, is a compulsion *to perform a duty already recognized*, and recognized in the statutes of the United States. To all truly patriotic citizens, then, it would not be compulsory. The word "compulsory" would apply, in their minds, to someone else, just as the criminal law applies to "someone else" and sends the criminal *by compulsion* to jail.

#### A CURE FOR OUR UNDEMOCRATIC DEMOCRACY

Capitalist and laborer would then have to dig trenches side by side, in the rain and the mud; they would share the same rations from the "chuck-wagon"; they would sleep side by side in the same "dog-tent"; and the better soldier of the two would win promotion. That is a consummation devoutly to be wished, as one sees the sinister disputes and the class hatred summoned up by the disgraceful phrase, "capital and labor." This "elbow-touch" and comradeship of camp and field, which we in America need so badly with all our vaunted democracy, has already proved to be a great force working for the truest democracy in the French Republic, the Swiss Republic, and the Commonwealth of Australia.

#### MILITARISM IMPOSSIBLE IN A TRUE DEMOCRACY

The fact that "militarism" in some other country can be, or actually has been, *superimposed* upon the essentially democratic structure of compulsory military service, is no argument against it, for the simple reason that *only an autocracy* can thus superimpose militarism upon a people. If we are to determine the effect of compulsory service upon a nation, we must first ask ourselves an exceedingly important question: "Are we considering autocratic monarchies, or are we considering democracies?" In the case of the United States we are considering a democracy. We can argue, therefore, only on the basis of what compulsory service has done in other democracies—France, Switzerland, Australia. From this,

the sole logical basis of reasoning, are we not forced to the conclusion that compulsory training and service are essentially democratic?

#### UNIVERSAL SERVICE THE ONLY SCIENTIFIC METHOD

But this is by no means all. When war comes upon us, we shall find that universal service is essentially scientific. The inevitable sacrifice of life, when entailed under universal service conditions, *distributes* the loss of men among *all* classes or grades of human value to the nation. Whereas, under the voluntary system *only the flower* of a nation's manhood, with but few exceptions, is sacrificed in war. The "slackers," the materialists, the unpatriotic are left as survivors to breed future population. The casualties in the French Army, for instance, represent virtually a "perpendicular" loss; or, in other words, a loss of a part of each stratum, from the highest to the lowest, in human value to the French nation. On the other hand, the casualties in the British Army, under the voluntary system, represented a terrible "horizontal" loss, or a loss of the bravest and best, a loss of human value taken from the highest strata of Great Britain's manhood. And so it was during the greater part of our own Civil War, with what results to posterity no man can tell.

#### SEEING IS BELIEVING

If the American people could *see* clearly the now unseen lessons of their military history, from 1776 to 1898, they would see clearly the military necessities of the nation to-day. But the vast majority of Americans have never understood the real facts as distinguished from the fables of their military history. The result is that they have little or no insight into the question of what preparedness really means. One would suppose that the greatest war in all human history would, nevertheless, drive home the lesson. Yet it has not. True, it has awakened the American people to some sense of their military weakness. They flatter themselves that "at last" they have "waked up" to the urgency of preparedness; but it is only a fitful disturbance of their sleep in a fool's paradise which thus seems to them an "awakening."

The fact is that they are now groping toward a preparedness larger in quantity, but of the same old kind, rather than reaching with clear vision toward a preparedness different and superior in quality. The present weapon of defence, the militia and volunteer

system, is, though Americans as a whole fail to see it, merely a **BLUNDERBUSS**. This blunderbuss, Americans suddenly discover, is too *small*. Therefore, they are demanding a **LARGER BLUNDERBUSS**.

Why demand a larger blunderbuss, when you can get a **MACHINE GUN**? In other words, what the United States needs is not a larger militia and volunteer system, but a different and superior system altogether, which is universal service. **THIS IS THE MACHINE GUN!**

#### THE HEART OF THE MATTER

While the people are groping toward new ideas and new standards in military and naval affairs, how can the largest possible number of citizens be reached and educated in the shortest possible time, to the end that they may face the true facts of their military history, and, having faced those facts, create a mighty force of public opinion working *in the right direction* toward a sound military and naval policy?

In this age of instantaneous communication of thought by means of newspapers and magazines, when millions read to-morrow what is said or written to-day by one man, the answer to the foregoing question seems simple: Educate the people through the newspapers and magazines. And the fact is that a certain amount of intelligent discussion has already found its way into the public prints. Unfortunately, however, a great deal of this discussion is discounted, or falls on deaf ears, because the whole subject has entered into the realm of politics. This is utterly demoralizing. Preparedness should not be a political question in the sense of being a party question. Moreover, powerful forces of publicity are arrayed against even an increase in the *personnel* or *matériel* of our *present* system of maintaining an army and a navy.

While the greatest question before the country is thus involved in politics, and while the contending forces of the pacifists and the advocates of preparedness are taking the field against each other, the few experts who know what the nation needs, the trained officers of the army and the navy, hardly obtain a hearing. And meanwhile the heart of the matter has not been touched.

The heart of the matter would seem to be this: That millions of Americans must be taught, and taught quickly, *the bitter lessons of their own military history*; that the officers of the army and navy, men removed from politics, should mobilize their resources of publicity, and organize a great campaign of education in American



military and naval history. Thus to educate millions of people in a few years, under ordinary circumstances, might seem impossible, yet that is precisely what the German Navy League accomplished, in times of peace, in a few years. Now, in time of war, the iron is hot. It is time for the experts of the army and navy to strike.

#### THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATION TOWARD PREPAREDNESS

Before education of any kind can be brought to bear upon the persons to be educated, there must be an understanding of the kind and degree of ignorance to be met, and of the *inherent prejudices* to be overcome.

What are the inherent prejudices of the average American concerning our military history and policy, past and present?

#### GREAT PREJUDICE NUMBER ONE

The average American believes, first, that a *small establishment of regulars, whenever the emergency arises, can successfully leaven a large lump of militia and volunteers*. He has always believed in this fallacy, and he believes it *now*, despite the stunning proof of its falsity clinched by Great Britain's experience in the present war. In fact, there is but little exaggeration in saying that this belief has always been almost a part of an American's religion.

This belief, inherited from England, is in our own history the independent result of three main causes:

- (a) The total misunderstanding of the real factors of American success, or escape from disaster, in all our wars.
- (b) The distrust of standing armies, or "militarism," engendered during the colonial period.
- (c) The fables of American military and naval history taught in the schools and colleges even to this day.

Until the belief of the average American, thus stated, can be obliterated, the United States need not hope for adequate military preparedness.

#### GREAT PREJUDICE NUMBER TWO

Secondly, the average American believes that *the man who enlists in the army or the navy is either wasting his life or is inferior to other men—in some way not explained*. This statement will, of course, be hotly denied. Yet the average American, down in his heart, knows it is true. AND IT WILL ALWAYS BE TRUE

WHEREVER A NATION MAINTAINS A PROFESSIONAL ARMY. It will cease to be true only WHEN THE ARMY AND THE NATION ARE ONE AND THE SAME. It is human nature to think that some one else is inferior; it is not human nature to think that you yourself are inferior. We can never have a truly American or a truly democratic army in these United States until the uniform of a soldier in the ranks and the uniform of the bluejacket in the fore-castle constitute a dual badge of honor, not only actually, as they are *now*, but by the consent of *all* Americans. This applies with equal force to Great Britain, and is eloquently expressed by many English writers, among them Frederick Scott Oliver, in his "Ordeal by Battle." Yet it has never been put in words that can equal the ringing lines of Kipling:

I went into a theater as sober as could be,  
They gave a drunk civilian room, but 'adn't none for me;  
They sent me to the gallery or round the music-'alls,  
But when it comes to fightin', Lord! they'll shove me in the stalls!

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy, wait  
outside";  
But it's "Special train for Atkins" when the trooper's on  
the tide.  
The troopship's on the tide, my boys, the troopship's on  
the tide,  
O it's "Special train for Atkins" when the trooper's on  
the tide.

Yes, makin' mock o' uniforms that guard you while you sleep  
Is cheaper than them uniforms, an' they're starvation cheap;  
An' hustlin' drunken soldiers when they're goin' large a bit  
Is five times better business than paradin' in full kit.

The word "drunken" would not be associated with the word "soldier" or the word "sailor" if we had universal service. The words "enlisted man," unknown in France and Switzerland, would not exist, would no longer designate a being essentially different from an officer. The uniform of a soldier or sailor would then be seen in the boxes at the opera, instead of being the insignia of *persona non grata* at a moving-picture show!

Whosoever comforts himself with the thought that Kipling's poem does not apply to the American enlisted man as well as to the British Tommy (in the *mind* of the average American, of course) either does not know the facts or exercises an amazing power of self-deception, or knows he is a hypocrite.

## THE BLIND SPOT

It is difficult to find an analogy that will illustrate fully the peculiar attitude of the average American toward the military policy of the nation. Not until it is realized that Americans *see* most things clearly, but see one thing—military policy—not at all, does the analogy present itself. This analogy must be, then, something which shall express a defect of vision, but a defect in only one part of the vision as a whole. No parallel can be found except in the blind spot of the retina, "that point in the retina of the eye which is insensible to light."

How far does this analogy carry us? Fortunately, for the sake of illustration that is significant, it will carry us just so far and no farther; the point at which the parallelism ceases is the point at which an optimistic construction can be placed upon the analogy.

At the outset, the analogy holds good. The possessor of a blind spot, speaking in terms of anatomy, *is not aware that he has any defect in vision until that defect is proved to exist*. Only an expert or a person having superior special knowledge of the subject, in this case an anatomist or a physician, can prove or demonstrate the existence of the blind spot. Secondly, the analogy holds good in this: *that even when a man is convinced that he has a blind spot, he soon ceases to attach any value to the fact*. The reason is obvious—under *normal* conditions, under *usual* conditions, the blind spot gives him no trouble.

The application of the analogy is now clear. Just as the existence of the anatomical defect is not realized, so the American defect of "vision," where military affairs are concerned, is not known to exist. Also, it may be said that only an *expert* in military affairs can successfully prove or demonstrate that the defect actually is a fact. Moreover, even when the defect is pointed out to the American people, they soon cease to attach any serious value to it, since *under usual or normal conditions*, which is to say, *in times of peace*, the American military blind spot gives Americans no trouble.

Here, of course, the parallelism ceases. The imperfection of the analogy lies in the fact that the anatomical "blind spot" will not cause trouble even under abnormal conditions, while the American military blind spot, somber and foreboding as the statement must be, is bound to cause, when war springs upon us suddenly, an untold waste of blood and treasure.

Finally, to round out the possibilities of the analogy, it should be

realized that whereas the blind spot of anatomy cannot be eradicated, the American military blind spot can be made to disappear by education.

#### ASSERTION NEEDS PROOF

Thus far we have been dealing in assertion, and it is now most necessary to prove this assertion. For there are many thousands if not millions of Americans who will take exception to the foregoing statements, "lock, stock, and barrel." Indeed, if most Americans agreed with these statements, there would be, happily, no need of formulating them.

To judge by letters written to the editor of a certain New York newspaper, frank criticism of American military policy during our past history hurts the pride of the average American. His pride is hurt because, as he thinks, though erroneously, that our glorious traditions in war seem to fade under such criticism. His astonishment is quickly followed by resentment and scorn. To take a specific case in point, a certain editorial article expressed the opinion that our military policy has always been a false one; that it has led to many defeats, routs, and disasters which Americans have forgotten; that our escape from ultimate disaster in all our wars has been the result of factors having little or nothing to do with the efficiency of our armies; that we have won in spite of our inefficiency. A subscriber wrote an impassioned communication denying the truth of the editor's statements:

How strange that we have *won* all our wars with this same "false" military policy. We *did* win, did we not, in 1776, 1812, 1846, 1861 and 1898? What more could be asked for? Why not leave our military policy well enough alone, considering the undoubted fact that it has always brought us success?"

At this juncture in the controversy, an army officer wrote a letter supporting the views expressed by the editor. The excited correspondent then flared up as follows:

Who is this upstart that makes such sweeping assertions? If they were accepted they would nullify the traditions of our entire military history, and throw discredit upon the intelligence of Americans throughout the whole time of our existence as a nation.

Assuming that the American citizen who wrote these words of condemnation is representative of the American blind spot, it can be readily seen that he felt justified in referring to the army officer as an "upstart."

## THE WARNING OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

The first "upstart" to express the views of the army officer was George Washington, the Father of his Country, and the commander-in-chief of the Continental armies throughout the Revolutionary War. In Washington's letter to Congress, written on September 15, 1780, he sounded the grave but unheeded warning which follows:

*Regular troops alone are equal to the exigencies of modern war, as well for defence as offence, and when a substitute is attempted it must prove illusory and ruinous.*

These are the words of authority, of actual experience in high command. They are the words of one who was in the best position to know whereof he spoke. They are words carefully weighed and deliberately chosen. They are more true to-day than they were in 1780, if such a thing be possible. The American citizen of 1917 may well think them over. In the next paragraph of Washington's letter he continued:

*No militia will ever acquire the habits necessary to resist a regular force. The firmness requisite for the real business of fighting is only to be attained by constant course of discipline and service.*

Either the most casual or the deepest study of our military history will show that Americans have never followed, never even understood, Washington's solemn words of advice.

The third paragraph of Washington's letter to be quoted here should be committed to memory by every American citizen of to-day:

*I have never yet been a witness to a single instance that can justify a different opinion, and it is most earnestly to be wished that the liberties of America may no longer be trusted, in a material degree, to so precarious a defence.*

Have the American people ever appreciated the significance of these ringing words of truth? There is but one answer: they have not. Americans of 1780 did not grasp their meaning, and the unadorned-facts of our military history prove, again and again, that the American people have never *seen* Washington's meaning. "They have eyes, but see not." They have a blind spot. We have always depended upon the militia and volunteers. Only once have Americans waged a really great war—the Civil War—and only once (in this Civil War) have we had, since Washington, a great American who saw Washington's great truth.

## THE INSIGHT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Abraham Lincoln was the second "upstart" whose genius pierced through the fog of error known as American military policy. This policy had failed, and failed miserably, in 1861 and 1862. The Union was saved only by *dropping* our military policy of militia and volunteers, and by substituting, at the eleventh hour, a totally different policy. In 1863 the *Draft Act* was passed. Compulsory military training and compulsory military service brought about the only armed forces that could end the Civil War.

In the letters and state papers of Abraham Lincoln there is a document headed "Opinion on the Draft," and dated August 15, 1863. It proves, in words written by the heroic genius who has been called the greatest of all Americans, that our military policy failed in the greatest crisis through which our people have ever passed. Lincoln stated:

They tell us that the law is unconstitutional. It is the first instance, I believe, in which the power of Congress to do a thing has ever been questioned in a case when the power is given by the Constitution in express terms. Whether a power can be implied when it is not expressed has often been the subject of controversy; but this is the first case in which the degree of effrontery has been ventured upon of denying a power which is plainly and distinctly written down in the Constitution. The Constitution declares that "The Congress shall have power . . . to raise and support armies." . . . The whole scope of the conscription act is "to raise and support armies." . . . *Shall we shrink from the necessary means to maintain our free government?* . . . *Are we degenerate? Has the manhood of our race run out?*

## THE MESSAGES OF WASHINGTON AND LINCOLN COMBINED

If Americans will analyze the messages to posterity vouchsafed to them by their two greatest men, Washington and Lincoln, they will be forced to the following conclusions:

1. That a "constant course of discipline and service" can alone make a soldier, by whatever name you choose to call that soldier.
2. That service in the army or the navy is the duty of an able-bodied citizen, and not a matter of choice.
3. That the Constitution gives to Congress the power to establish a system of universal compulsory military training and military service, not only in war, but *in peace*.
4. That *only in time of peace*, according to Washington, can we prepare intelligently for war.
5. That the American army and navy must both be under the

control of the federal government, completely under that control, and not partly under the control of the states.

6. That our military policy in the past has been a false one.

#### THE HINDSIGHT OF THOMAS JEFFERSON

Washington and Lincoln represented the truth. Thomas Jefferson, until his later years, represented the error—the blind spot. This can be proved from Jefferson's letters. In regard to military and naval affairs, his letters show not only confusion of mind, but a complete change of mind, brought about by the bitter experiences of the War of 1812.

First, as to Jefferson's confusion of mind. (1) In his first annual message to Congress, December 8, 1801, he said:

For defence against invasion, their [the regular army's] number is as nothing; nor is it conceived needful *or safe* that a standing army should be kept up in time of peace for that purpose. Uncertain as we must ever be of the particular point in our circumference where an enemy may choose to invade us, the only force which can be ready at every point and *competent* to oppose them, is the body of neighboring citizens as formed into a militia.

The capture of the city of Washington, in 1814, forced Jefferson to reverse his opinion of the militia thus expressed, though he attributed the rout at Bladensburg to the wrong causes.

2. In a letter to Mr. Crawford, dated February 11, 1815, Jefferson wrote:

It [the battle of New Orleans] proved. . . . that our militia are heroes . . . and that, *when unembarrassed by field evolutions, which they do not understand*, their skill in the fire-arm, and deadly aim, give them *great advantages* over regulars.

Could anything be more absurd than this statement from a believer in militia? He frankly confesses that the militia are incapable of field operations! He believes that the militia have a great advantage over regulars because of their superior marksmanship! No further comment is necessary to point out the humiliating maze of intellectual confusion into which Jefferson was heading in that letter. He was a typical representative of the American blind spot, for he did not even begin to realize his ignorance. His argument, on the face of it, is a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Secondly, as to Jefferson's complete change of mind, though the confusion still persisted.

1. In the "Anas," or Jefferson's private diary, under date of

November 23, 1793, we read of a Cabinet meeting held shortly before his resignation as Secretary of State under President Washington:

November 23. At the President's. Present, Knox, Randolph and Th: Jefferson. Subject, the heads of the speech. One was, a proposition to Congress to fortify the principal harbors. I opposed the expediency of the General Government's undertaking it, and of the President's proposing it. . . . It was proposed to recommend the establishment of a military academy. I objected that none of the specified powers given by the Constitution to Congress would authorize this.

2. In a letter to Mr. Madison, June 15, 1797, Jefferson wrote:

The Senate yesterday rejected . . . their own bill for raising four more companies of light dragoons, by a vote of 15 to 13. . . . To-day the bill for manning the frigates and buying nine vessels (about \$60,000 each) comes to its third reading. Some flatter us we may throw it out. . . . The fortification bill is before the Representatives still. It is thought by many that with all the mollifying clauses they can give it, it may perhaps be thrown out.

Jefferson was at that time Vice-President.

3. It will be remembered that in 1794 Congress had authorized the building of six frigates. Of these, three were completed and launched in 1797. In 1798 occurred the *Baltimore* affair, and in the same year French privateers began to make captures in American harbors. At once Congress authorized the building of more ships-of-war, since diplomatic protests had been made in vain. Talleyrand, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, insolently informed American commissioners that a large bribe (he named the sum of money) would procure safety for American merchantmen. To this offer Charles Cotesworth Pinckney made the famous reply: "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute!" In 1799-1800 followed our "quasi-war" with France, in which we waged naval warfare on a small scale in the West Indies, capturing a number of merchantmen and the French ships-of-war *l'Insurgente* and *le Berceau*. As the result of this resort to action rather than words France yielded, and actual war was prevented, because the French realized that our capture of 67 of their merchantmen was an ominous sign of our power to inflict damage. Then came our war with Tripoli, when the small American navy brought the Barbary pirates to terms of submission that were made permanent in 1815 by Decatur's squadron acting against Algiers.

Our naval activity in 1799, 1800, and from 1801 to 1805 was the schooling of the American naval officers who gained for their



country in the War of 1812 the respect of the world. What is more, this naval activity had accomplished results. One would think that Jefferson should have appreciated these things, but he did not. Soon after France had acceded to our terms Jefferson became President, on the 4th of March, 1801. Following his inauguration he expressed his desire to "lay up the larger men-of-war in the Potomac, where they would require *only one set of plunderers* to take care of them." This was the reward of an officer like Truxtun, of a midshipman like David Porter—to be classified as "plunderers." Thomas Jefferson failed utterly to understand naval officers, or to appreciate the value of a navy. Further proofs of his attitude of mind are too numerous to quote, save for the few that follow.

4. In 1807 occurred the *Chesapeake* affair; a United States ship-of-war, taken unawares, was riddled by British broadsides, and from her three American citizens were taken aboard H. M. S. *Leopard*. Jefferson's reply to this outrage was to order all British ships-of-war to leave American ports. Thereupon Great Britain issued an Order in Council which treated American ports "as if the same were actually blockaded in the most strict and rigorous manner by His Majesty's naval forces." Napoleon then issued the Milan Decree, that "any foreign vessel allowing the British to board her and examine her papers" became "*ipso facto* liable to seizure." Congress at once passed the Embargo Act, prohibiting our vessels from leaving port. This and the Non-Importation Act had, of course, a most disastrous effect on American trade. Such legislation entailed the miseries of war without its compensations. It rendered our commerce stagnant, and by forcing business interests to evade the law, corrupted the moral sense. Affairs, as might have been predicted, went from bad to worse, until, in January, 1811, our Minister to Great Britain took his departure.

Bearing in mind the *Chesapeake* affair and other events of 1807, one is astonished to read a letter from Jefferson to Thomas Paine written during that year: "I believe that gunboats are the only *water* defence which can be useful to us and protect us from the *ruinous folly of a navy*" (Works, Ford ed., IX, 137). "The gunboats desired by Jefferson were small, cheap craft, equipped with one or two guns and kept on shore under sheds until actually needed, when they were to be launched and manned by a sort of naval militia. A large number of these boats were constructed. In bad weather, or when employed against a frigate, they were worse

than useless, and Jefferson's 'gunboat system' was admittedly a failure." Listen, then, to the error of the blind spot: "The ruinous folly of a navy." This "ruinous folly" saved the War of 1812 from being a complete fiasco, broke the sea spell of England, did much to end the war by damaging England's commerce, and won for Americans their own self-respect, and the respect of the world. There was also the decisive effect of Macdonough's victory on Lake Champlain, which saved the Great Lakes and a strip of territory south of the Lakes.

We have seen Jefferson's attitude of mind during so-called times of peace. It is now important to indicate his change of mind, the complete reversal of his point of view, by the time actual experience during the War of 1812 had proved him to be wrong. The one occurrence that really impressed Jefferson was the battle of Bladensburg and the subsequent burning of the public buildings at Washington.

1. In a letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, Jefferson boasted of our naval victories in single-ship actions against British ships-of-war. Had he forgotten his ideas of the past—his "ruinous folly of a navy"?

2. In another letter to Lafayette, he remarked: "Our 30 years of peace had taken off, or superannuated, all our Revolutionary *officers of experience* and grade; and *our first draft in the lottery of untried characters had been most unfortunate*. The delivery of the fort and army of Detroit by the traitor Hull; the disgrace at Queenstown; the massacre at Frenchtown under Winchester; and the surrender of Boerstler in an open field to one-third of his numbers," were, he says, "inauspicious." He failed to analyze the real nature of the factors of defeat, but he clearly admitted that the militia system had failed. (February 14, 1815.)

#### THOMAS JEFFERSON FAVORED COMPULSORY MILITARY SERVICE

3. Most extraordinary of all his statements, in view of his former opinions, was his expression of regret, and even of sorrow, that Monroe's plan for *compulsory military service*, submitted when Monroe was acting Secretary of War, was not adopted. To Monroe he wrote concerning this plan to introduce into the United States Napoleon's method of classification by age and conscription:

Nothing more *wise* or *efficient* could have been imagined than what you proposed. It would have filled our ranks with *regulars*, and that, too, by throwing a *just share*

*of the burthen on the purses of those persons who are exempt either by age or office; it would have rendered our militia . . . a nation of warriors. But the go-by seems to have been given to your proposition, and longer sufferance is necessary to force us to what is best. We seem equally incorrigible. . . .*

Jefferson painted in those words a cruelly realistic picture of the average American mind afflicted with the blind spot until too late. He had at last come to understand the value of *regulars*; he had even recognized the value of *compulsory military training*. In other words, after a life-time of erroneous thinking about military affairs, he had not only agreed in principle with George Washington, but had anticipated the insight of Abraham Lincoln.

That there may be no doubt of this change in Jefferson's mind, the following extracts from his letters are quoted:

1. He expressed regret that Madison had accepted the billet of Secretary of War:

*Raw troops, no troops, insubordinate militia, want of arms, want of money, all will be charged to want of management in you.*

2. In a letter to Monroe:

*We must train and classify the whole of our male citizens, and make military instruction a part of collegiate education. We can never be safe until this is done.*

These are the words of the statesman who opposed the establishment of the Military Academy at West Point, who opposed coast fortifications, who hoped to throw out bills for increasing our regular army, and bills to provide officers and men for our naval vessels. Compulsory military service, and compulsory military training! These were the ideas forced upon Thomas Jefferson by the bitter lessons of war. These were, at last, the ideas of "the embodiment of American democracy."

Washington in his wisdom, Lincoln in his wisdom, and Thomas Jefferson in his ignorance that changed to wisdom—have the American people ever grasped the meaning of their messages to posterity?

Is it not just, is it not free from exaggeration, to maintain that a nation which has consistently failed to understand, much less to heed, the solemn warnings of its greatest men, is a nation afflicted with a defect of vision? Is it not necessary to realize, after reading the words of Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln, that the American people have a military blind spot, and that this blind spot must be done away with if we are to escape disaster?

## THE ORIGIN OF THE BLIND SPOT

The blind spot originated at the battle of Bunker Hill, at the very outset of our military history.

This fact has been clearly recognized by experts, and notably by Charles Francis Adams, General Greene, and General Upton. General Greene has stated the point concisely in his military history of the American Revolution:

"The Americans," he writes, speaking of Bunker Hill, "without proper organization, equipment, or supplies, had fought the best regular troops of Europe, and had repulsed them until their ammunition gave out . . . and they were convinced that they could do it again, and that *regular organization was not necessary*—a conviction which they tenaciously held to throughout the Revolution; and then *transmitted to their descendants, who have believed it almost to this day.*" General Greene should be forgiven for saying "almost" to this day. He had not heard the statement made in 1915, that an army of a million men can be raised between sunrise and sunset; he had not even heard of the word "pacifist," or of the phrase "peace at any price."

Bunker Hill was a blunder on both sides; the only thing that saved the Americans was the fact that the British showed a superior capacity for blundering. Colonel Prescott attempted to hold Charlestown Neck, a peninsula connected with the mainland by a very narrow causeway. Thus, in the face of an enemy that enjoyed complete command of the sea, he walked into a trap. If the British general, Gage, had not been a fool, he would have taken the advice of Clinton and his other officers, who urged him to close the trap upon the Americans by occupying the western end of Charlestown Neck—the door of the trap—under cover of the guns of the ships. Prescott and his men would then have been powerless, for on the mainland they had no troops that could have driven the British off, and their own retreat would have ended in slaughter. They could have surrendered, or they could have died of starvation, as they chose.

But Gage showed, as Charles Francis Adams proves, "a superior capacity for blundering." With great loss, the British general actually *drove Prescott's men out of the trap*, by hurling a series of frontal attacks against an intrenched position on high ground. Also, Gage *left the only door of escape wide open*. There are many kinds of luck, but Prescott was blessed with most unusual luck; he made a blunder which should have cost him his whole force of men, and his opponent, by making an even worse blunder,

allowed Prescott's brave men to win an invaluable moral victory. For, until their powder and ball were used up, they resisted an equal force of the best troops in Europe.

This moral victory was sorely needed to steady and strengthen the American cause. From the point of view of moral effect, it was admittedly the most important battle of the Revolution. Unfortunately, the battle of Bunker Hill was also the first and the most important cause of the American military blind spot. Those who are not convinced of this will do well to read the "Essays Military and Diplomatic" of Charles Francis Adams, and the following comment of General Upton:

The lesson to be learned from this remarkable conflict is the value of trained officers—a lesson which neither our statesmen nor our historians have ever been able to appreciate. . . . During the various assaults it was the confidence of the militia in Prescott that enabled them to wait until he gave the command "fire." Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Knowlton, and . . . other officers [present at the battle] had received military training in the French and Indian War. It was by the advice and under the supervision of veteran officers that the intrenchments were constructed, and it was by reason of their practical experience in the art of war that a defense was made so gallant and so appalling in its results as to amaze the British army. . . . In the presence of a Prescott, the patriotic Warren, without military knowledge and more eager for the triumph of his country than for personal renown, waived his rank of major-general in a reply as modest as it was true, "I come as a volunteer to learn from a soldier of experience."

General Upton then arrives at the inevitable conclusion:

Without pausing to discover the secret of the defence of Bunker Hill, the mistaken conviction seized the public mind that the militia were invincible, and that patriotism was the sole qualification for a soldier's calling—a fallacy which paralyzed the military legislation of the Revolution and constantly jeopardized our liberties by inducing the political leaders of the time to rely too confidently upon raw and undisciplined levies.

Thus, at Bunker Hill, started the legend that untrained Americans are superior to trained foreigners. He who reads the many letters of General Washington to Congress during the perilous years which followed might come to the conclusion that Congress was bereft of all sense and judgment, unless the patriotic men of that body had indeed developed the military blind spot that has come down from their time to ours.

#### THE HARM DONE BY OUR MILITARY POLICY DURING THE REVOLUTION

The Revolution dragged on for years. Desertions and flights of the militia occurred regularly. Of these unmistakable signs of

lack of training and organization American school histories, and, indeed, most of our famous historians, are strangely silent. The flight of Parsons' brigade at Long Island, Parsons' and Fellows' brigades at the evacuation of New York, Sullivan's division at Brandywine, the Virginia and South Carolina brigades at Camden, S. C., the North Carolina regiment at Guilford Court House, as well as incidents of the Harmar and St. Clair expeditions are perhaps the most notable, or notorious, examples. The militia mutinied at Morristown, at Pompton, at Lancaster; at Lancaster 80 recruits, joined by 200 other malcontents, marched to Philadelphia demanded their pay, and held Congress prisoners on June 21, 1783. The letters of Washington during this period give ample proof of the demoralization among troops over which he was given no adequate power of control. Only the Regular or Continental Army showed consistent steadiness. Of the militia, General Schuyler complained as follows:

The vexation of spirit under which I labor, that a barbarous complication of disorders should prevent me from reaping those laurels for which I have unweariedly wrought since I was honored with this command; the anxiety I have suffered . . . lest the army should starve, occasioned by a scandalous want of subordination and inattention to my orders in some of the officers I left to command at the different posts; the vast variety of vexations and disagreeable incidents that almost every hour arise in some department or other, not only retard my course, but have put me considerably back for some days past. If Job had been a general in my situation, his memory had not been so famous for patience. . . . Nothing can surpass the impatience of the troops from the New England colonies to get to their firesides. Near 300 of them arrived a few days ago, unable to do any duty; but as soon as I administered that grand specific, a discharge, they instantly acquired health, and rather than be detained a few days to cross Lake George, they undertook a march from here of 200 miles with the greatest alacrity. . . . *Our army requires to be put on a different footing.* . . . I cannot, without the most extreme pain, see that disregard of discipline, confusion, and inattention which reign so generally in this quarter, and I am therefore determined to resign.

General Montgomery reported that his militia threatened to mutiny because he ordered them to march in one direction, and they decided it was better to march in another. Official documents which prove these contentions about the militia are too numerous to mention, let alone to quote.

On the other hand, the loyalty of Washington's trained troops, and the bravery of the Americans, whether regulars or militia, which was shown by the *splendid* but *exceptional* elements of the armies as a whole, cannot be overlooked, since it was the heroic few among the many demoralized elements which held Washing-

ton's small forces together and established many of our most glorious traditions. The *individual* valor and self-sacrifice of our forefathers is a heritage of which we are justly proud, but it has no bearing upon the *efficiency* or *inefficiency* of our *military policy* and our *system of raising armies*. Our regret should be that the cause of independence repeatedly faced irretrievable disaster, that the Revolution lasted so long, that the lives of so many hundreds of our bravest and best were *needlessly* sacrificed between 1776 and 1783.

Most important of all, if Americans are to appreciate the real factor of success in the Revolution, was the aid of the French at Yorktown. Misled by fables, we are apt to regard Yorktown as an American victory, yet Washington frankly acknowledged the impossibility of even attempting to defeat Cornwallis, let alone accomplishing that decisive result, unaided. We won the Revolution, in the last analysis, only through the *direct assistance* of a foreign nation. At the very moment when the British were ready to embark at New York an expedition to reinforce Cornwallis with heavy consignments of troops and supplies, Admiral de Grasse of the French Navy, at the Battle off Cape Henry, defeated the British squadrons under Admiral Graves, and secured control of the sea in that vicinity. It is a peculiar fact that only once in her history has France controlled the sea in such a way as to affect British military operations, or to strike a decisive blow. This once was at Yorktown. The battle off Cape Henry is one of the great examples of the influence of sea power upon history, for it meant to Great Britain the loss of her American colonies. What a false American military policy had failed to do, was done through temporary French control of the sea; De Grasse cut off all supplies of men and munitions, food and equipment, from Cornwallis; De Grasse alone enabled Washington to besiege Cornwallis. Only by the aid of the French troops landed from De Grasse's fleet was Washington able to maintain the siege of Yorktown and bring to a triumphant conclusion the war which established the independence of the United States.

General Upton summarizes the lessons of the Revolution on page 66 of his admirable work, "The Military Policy of the United States." American citizens may well read his conclusions carefully; in the present article, there is space for but one of his 15 "Lessons": "First. That nearly all of the dangers which threatened the cause of independence may be traced to the total inex-

perience of our statesmen in regard to military affairs, which led to vital mistakes in army legislation." With every willingness to forgive these statesmen for the inexperience which we cannot blame them for, their descendants of 1917 should remember that *the men of the Continental Congress chose not to take the advice of capable military officers, and that by taking such expert advice they might have ended the war with less sacrifice of blood and treasure, in a shorter time.* The fact that we finally succeeded in winning our independence with the direct assistance of a friendly foreign power may well give us pause before we assume that our military policy during the Revolution was correct.

#### THE BLIND SPOT IN THE WAR OF 1812

During the first *two years* of the War of 1812, while Napoleon kept the British Army campaigning across the seas, the United States had a splendid opportunity to invade Canada or to prepare its forces to resist invasion from the north. For when war was declared, the British regulars in Canada numbered less than 4,500 effectives, and *this number was not increased until the summer of 1814.*

The American people, therefore, had ample time in which to put in practice their favorite theory of military policy—the fallacy that a small establishment of regulars, whenever the emergency arises, can successfully leaven a large lump of militia and volunteers. Needless to say, the two years of *rare opportunity were wasted.* They were wasted because the United States could not in that time raise a sufficiently *large* force of sufficiently *trained* men sufficiently well *organized* to accomplish anything worth while.

In a previous article in the UNITED STATES NAVAL INSTITUTE PROCEEDINGS, the writer has described at some length the events leading up to the Plattsburg crisis of September 11, 1814. The reader is referred to this detailed account of a crisis which proved that our military policy was wholly a false one. It is sufficient to say here that only by the great skill of Thomas Macdonough at the battle of Lake Champlain was the campaign of 1814 in the north saved from disaster; that on land, the entire force of American troops which was ready to prevent the loss of the Great Lakes and a strip of territory south of them was an ill-assorted force of 2,500 men. Of these men, 1,500 were regulars; the rest were untrained militia and volunteers who had joined at the last moment—between September 4 and September 11, the day of the battle.



This force of 1,500 regulars and 1,000 militia was to resist the British army of invasion, 14,000 strong, under Sir George Prevost. Had Macdonough *not* won the battle of Lake Champlain (and he had, through American shortsightedness, a force inferior to the British naval force under Downie) the British army of invasion would have penetrated to Crown Point, if not to Albany. This is conceded by Admiral Mahan; it was conceded by the American general at Plattsburg, Macomb. Yet the American people believe that Macomb's force actually stopped the British army on the line of the Saranac; Americans do not realize that Sir George Prevost's lines of communication were cut as soon as Macdonough gained control of the lake, and that this control alone stopped the British campaign of invasion. Since the naval battle, at its crisis, hinged upon the turning of the American flagship *Saratoga* "end for end" while at anchor to present her fresh broadside, this maneuver decided the whole campaign. To put the matter in another way, had a lucky shot from some British vessel cut the hawser attached to a kedge anchor off the *Saratoga's* starboard bow during the maneuver, Buffalo, Syracuse, Albany, and other towns would now, in all probability, be Canadian cities. Furthermore, the mere fact that after two years of war the Americans were still *on the defensive*, and on a very precarious defensive at that, is sufficient evidence that our military policy in 1812-1813 had been a failure. In 1812 the population of the United States was about 7,000,000. The population of Canada in 1812 was about 400,000. With these figures in mind, and remembering also that Great Britain during the first two years of the war was at death grips with Napoleon, and therefore could not maintain in Canada over 4,500 regulars, it is interesting to note General Upton's statement:

Had Congress on the 11th of January [1812], declared that all men owed their country military service, and decided to raise the army immediately . . . to 35,000 men, to be held for the term of five years or during the war, it scarcely admits of a doubt that after six months' training and discipline this force could have occupied Canada and ended the war in a single campaign.

*A fortiori*, the war would certainly have ended in a single campaign if this American army of 35,000 with reserves had been trained during times of peace under compulsory military service. There was plenty of warning that war was inevitable. A statesman with ordinary foresight should have known it at almost any time, from 1799 to 1807, and certainly no later than 1807.

One of the principal factors of the War of 1812 was the destruction of British commerce by our naval vessels and privateers. The former captured or destroyed \$6,000,000 worth of ships and cargoes; the latter, \$39,000,000 worth, (2,500 vessels in all.)

It is most unpleasant to review very closely the land campaigns of the War of 1812; a story, as Roosevelt sums it up, of "humiliating surrenders, abortive attacks, and panic routs." The small force of regulars fought well, but they were only a mere nucleus in any one battle, and as a rule, were not supported by the militia. Three battles stand out prominently: Bladensburg,\* the defence of Baltimore, and New Orleans. At Bladensburg, 5,401 Americans, mostly untrained and unorganized, after losing less than 12 killed and 40 wounded,† fled from the advance guards (about 1,500 men) of a British force numbering 3,500. Baltimore and New Orleans were to all intents and purposes more successful versions of Bunker Hill, for in these two battles the Americans were able to fight behind well-constructed intrenchments. Moreover, the British forces were not sufficient in numbers to carry out wide flanking movements. Upton writes:

\* The lessons of the war [of 1812] are so obvious that they need not be stated. Nearly all the blunders committed were repetitions in an aggravated form of the same blunders in the Revolution, and like them had their origin in the mistakes or omissions of military legislation.

With such a military policy, it was fortunate for the Americans that Perry and Macdonough saved the northern campaigns. It was even more fortunate that Great Britain was sorely embarrassed by Napoleon. We had won the Revolution, essentially, by the direct help of France; we escaped defeat in the War of 1812 through the *indirect* help of France. It never seems to occur to Americans to inquire what would have happened in 1812 if Great Britain's hands had been left free to deal with us, so that her whole military force could have been sent to invade us from Canada, under the leadership of the Duke of Wellington.

Speaking of Upton's conclusions, General Sherman was moved to express the following opinion: "The time may not be now, *but will come*, when these 'conclusions' will be appreciated, and may bear fruit even in our day." "In our day!" Alas! General

\*See "The Capture of Washington," by Edward D. Ingraham, Phila., 1849, for full details of the battle.

†Twelve killed and 40 wounded—what a defence was this of the capital of the country!

Sherman has long since been gathered to his fathers, and the United States still has, in 1917, virtually the same military policy which it had in 1812. Those who do not believe this need only examine the facts. In 1812, with a population of 7,000,000 approximately, our standing army numbered 6,744, and our militia about 15,000—virtually untrained. In 1916, our only thoroughly trained troops, the regular army, numbered approximately 87,000 men, and our effective militia not over 100,000 at the most optimistic estimate (85,000 according to the general staff, and but 220,000 “on paper”). Yet we have a population of 100,000,000! Considering the unprecedented development of the art of war since 1812, and the enormously larger forces of trained enemies we should have to fight in case of war, the United States is certainly no better off than in 1812, and if anything not so well off.

The War of 1812 made the American blind spot chronic.

#### THE FLORIDA WAR

Then came the “Florida War,” against Indians. The lessons of this war, *in which we never gained our object*, are summed up by General Upton as follows:

First, that its expense was tripled, if not quadrupled, by that feature of the law of 1821 which gave the President, in times of emergency, no discretion to increase the enlisted men of the regular army. Second, that, as in every previous war, after employing for short periods of service militia and volunteers, Congress found it *more humane and economical* to continue hostilities with regular troops, enlisted for the period of five years. Third, that *for want of a well-defined peace organization*, a nation of 17,000,000 of people contended for *seven years* with 1,200 Indian warriors, and finally closed the struggle without accomplishing the forcible emigration of the Indians, which was the original and sole cause of the war.

#### THE MEXICAN WAR

For the Mexican War the government had ample time to prepare. At its outbreak, an invasion of Mexico from the north under Taylor, and a march on Mexico City under Scott were contemplated. Scott’s campaign, based on Vera Cruz, waited upon Taylor’s accomplishments, since President Polk *could not spare enough troops* for Scott and Taylor both. General Taylor, the military representative, in the first campaign of the war, of a nation of 23,000,000 inhabitants, faced 6,000 Mexicans at Palo Alto with 2,200 men. Does this speak well for our military policy? Was it not a lasting shame to the American people, 23,000,000 of persons, one-tenth of which would have provided 2,300,000 fighting men,

one-fortieth of which would have provided 575,000 men, *one-thousandth* of which would have provided 23,000 fighting men, that this nation should have allowed Taylor to feed into the jaws of war, against an enemy almost thrice his numbers, the "little army" of less than 2,300 men? What sort of military policy was that? How was it anything but grossly stupid, nay, cowardly, to expose this insignificant handful of regulars at Resaca de la Palma, where they barely averted disaster? Where were the militia? Where was the organization to place the militia in the field at once? Where was the organization to train soldiers, and to prepare for war in times of peace? Had we learned *nothing* by 1846?

The full significance of the orders issued to General Taylor by the Secretary of War should be understood. These orders not only contemplated the possibility of invading Mexico, but "they looked to a bold and aggressive war to be prosecuted by the same class of troops that had been called out at the beginning of the War of 1812." In plain violation of the Constitution, which authorizes the use of the militia only "to execute the laws of the nation, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions," Taylor's orders sanctioned his entrance into Mexico with militia, and then failed to furnish the militia on time! Congress did nothing to increase the regular army. Time dragged on. Finally Taylor received a few regiments of militia. We "muddled through," *thanks only to the weakness of our enemy*, and to the *moral supremacy* which our *regulars* obtained over that enemy.

In Scott's campaign occurred that strange, unpatriotic incident of Cerro Gordo, never to be forgotten by our regular army officers, but never remembered, much less appreciated, by the American people. On the 8th of April, 1847, General Scott began his march toward Mexico City. On the 18th, at Cerro Gordo, he defeated the Mexicans. The road to the capital of the enemy's country now lay open before him. But when he sought to advance he found his army dissolved in the heart of the enemy's country. On May 4, Scott parted with *seven* of his *eleven* regiments of volunteers, numbering 4,000 men, who *left him in the lurch*, and returned to the United States! They had served 12 months, and nothing could prevent them from returning to their hearthstones if they so desired, since they were called out for only 12 months. This happened when Scott was within three days' march of Mexico City. He was compelled in consequence to abandon Jalapa, and, having no communication with his base of supplies, he found himself need-

lessly exposed to the danger of investment and capture, while the enemy, profiting by the delay, reorganized an army outnumbering Scott's by five to one. Again, despite misfortune, the Americans avoided disaster, but only because the Mexicans failed to take advantage of the great opportunity which our false military policy had given into their hands. The recommendations for a number of new *regular* regiments were not adopted until February 11, 1847, and their organization was thus so much delayed that they arrived only in time to participate in the brief operations about the city of Mexico.

In view of the foregoing, it is interesting to read President Polk's message to Congress, December, 1846, in which he says:

The events of these few months afford a gratifying proof that our country can, under any emergency, confidently rely . . . on an effective force ready at all times. . . .

What mockery of the facts! What an example, indeed, of the illusions caused by the blind spot! It was not so true that the Americans won the Mexican War, as it was that the Mexicans lost it. The main factor of our "success" was the hopeless inferiority of the enemy. From the point of view of military policy and "preparedness," we deserved to be beaten, and had we fought a stronger enemy, we should undoubtedly have met with very serious trouble, if not with disaster.

#### THE CIVIL WAR

And what of our Civil War? It is the same story over again, save for Lincoln's insight and his Draft Act. At the close of the year 1860 we presented to the world the spectacle of a great nation nearly destitute of military force. Our regular army numbered only 16,367 men. The line of the army was composed of 198 companies, of which 183 were stationed on the western frontier, or were *en route* to distant posts west of the Mississippi. The remaining 15 companies were stationed along the Canadian frontier, and on the Atlantic coast from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico. The militia were scarcely available. So destitute were they of training and organization or even equipment, that with the exception of a few regiments in our large cities they did not merit the name of a military force.

When secession came, and Washington was threatened, Lincoln was forced to throw to the winds all constitutionality, and to become a dictator.

It is not possible in this article to write a history of the Civil

War, but it is necessary to point out a few facts which have a direct bearing upon our military policy.

1. Testimony of General McDowell concerning the battle of Bull Run: "There was not an officer there who had ever *maneuvered troops in large bodies* . . . there was not one in the whole country. I wanted very much a little time; all of us wanted it. We did not have a bit of it." Again Americans depended upon militia and volunteers; again these militiamen and volunteers did not make a trained and organized army; again they met defeat, ran in a panic rout, and escaped real disaster only because the Confederates were not able to follow up their victory. "Mistaking numbers for strength, and forgetting, too, that the fame of the militia at Bunker Hill and New Orleans was acquired behind formidable intrenchments, Congress and the Cabinet, the press and the people, united in demanding that before their discharge the 75,000 three-months' men should be led into battle."\* In the panic that followed Bull Run, discipline and training, as usual, gave proof of their value in the behavior of the small force of regulars engaged. The battalion of regulars, which covered the retreat and was the last to leave the field, checked the enemy's pursuit, and retired in perfect order. These regulars, the only trained troops we had at Bull Run, consisted of eight companies made up of the Second, Third, and Eighth Infantry, a battalion of marines, a small detachment from the First and Second Dragoons, and six batteries of artillery. They checked for a time the advance of the Confederate army engaged at Bull Run, which is estimated at 29,949 men. On the same basis of men actually engaged, the Union army numbered 55,000. The Union loss in killed and wounded was but 2.7 per cent. of the force engaged; the same regiments, after a year of training, would have scorned to retire with a loss of less than 30 to 40 per cent., as can be proved by the casualty records later in the war. The effect of Bull Run was to give the Confederates all the advantages of the initiative, had they been able to use it; it paralyzed the Union military operations for more than six months. "Amazed and humiliated, the people bowed their heads, and confiding everything to military commanders, patiently awaited the opening of another campaign."

2. The Union was to meet more defeats during the next two years. Finally, however, this Union was preserved by the following great factors:

\*Upton.

(a) The preponderating resources of the North in men, money, and manufactures—in other words, sheer mass and weight.

(b) Ericsson's invention of the *Monitor*, which enabled the North to hold command of the sea at a critical moment, when the ironclad *Merrimac* threatened to break the blockade maintained by Federal wooden vessels.

(c) The gradual pressure of the North's naval blockade of the Confederate States, which throttled, in course of time, all military power in the South, by preventing munitions of war and supplies from reaching the armies of Jackson and Lee. This blockade was not really complete until the capture of Fort Fisher, January 15, 1865. The bearing of the great blockade on the ultimate success of the Union armies is eloquently brought out by another date, April 9, 1865, when Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox. Of the fall of Fort Fisher, Scharf, the Confederate historian, writes as follows:

The fall of Wilmington [made possible by the taking of Fort Fisher, which defended it] was the severest blow to the Confederate cause which it could receive. . . . It was far more injurious than the capture of Charleston, and, but for the moral effect, even more hurtful than the evacuation of Richmond. With Wilmington open, the supplies that reached the Confederate armies [by means of blockade runners] would have enabled them to maintain an unequal contest *for years*; but with the fall of Fort Fisher the constant stream of supplies was effectually cut off.

(d) The Draft Act, and its effect in the final organization of the Union armies. The draft was needed not so much to force the enlistment of more men, though this was essential, as to place all the troops under the complete control of their commanders, and make possible any organization of troops which the commanders saw fit to establish. It also prevented the constant drain of men who had previously, throughout the war, left the armies when their enlistments were up. Given the most cruel schooling which troops can undergo, the teaching of raw levies by thrusting them headlong into the maw of war, even our volunteers, after two years or so, had gained by this most costly *experience*. Thousands of the dead had laid down their lives needlessly, as "surplus casualties," not warranted by the numbers that would have been lost inevitably in war from the ranks of trained men. Inevitable casualties are loss enough, but thousands more must be butchered when raw troops engage in large operations, in order that the survivors may learn to be soldiers. The war had also been prolonged by the fact that thousands of men had left the armies

"when their time was up," constantly weakening the ranks. Such wasteful inefficiency, and such draining away of strength in numbers, could not longer continue, if the Union was to conquer. The Draft Act was the fruit of bitter experience.

#### THE WAR WITH SPAIN

Of all our wars, the War with Spain is most likely to be misinterpreted as a triumph of American military policy (if policy it can be called), because we met with such complete success in so short a time. Yet the War with Spain, when studied in the cold light of indisputable facts, was far less an American success than it was a Spanish failure. Indeed, had Spain exerted all her skill to *lose* the war, she could hardly have lost it more surely.

When it is remembered that control of the sea was essential to victory for either side, and when Spain's superiority in the number of trained troops, in Cuba alone, is considered, the factors of our success are almost precisely the measure of Spain's mistakes or of Spain's naval unpreparedness.

These factors may be summed up as follows:

1. At the outbreak of war, the Spanish Navy was barely equal, even "on paper," to the navy of the United States. Even if it had been prepared and equally as efficient as ours, it would have started with no advantage over the American Navy in point of comparative force.

2. As a matter of fact, no such approximate equality existed. The Spanish Navy was unprepared for war. In Asiatic waters, Montojo's squadron was in every way inferior to Dewey's squadron. We may feel sure that Dewey and his men would have won against an equal or a not-too-superior force; we are certain that he found the enemy's ships less than 3 to 5 in ratio to his strength of armor and armament. When the defences of Manila are reckoned, we have cause to congratulate ourselves on the low state of Spanish marksmanship in the shore batteries, as well as on the daring of Dewey's entrance to a supposedly mined bay, even at midnight. The mines, however, were not there, or were useless.

Spain's European naval forces also were illusory. The *Princesa de Asturias*, at the outbreak of war, had not received her boilers and engines. The battleship *Pelayo*, and the armored cruisers *Emperador Carlos V* and *Cristobal Colon* had not received their entire armament. Much necessary equipment, and muni-



tions, were lacking in Cervera's squadron; Camara's squadron was not ready for sea.

3. Despite this inferiority of available force in European waters, the Spanish Minister of Marine, against the repeated pleadings of Admiral Cervera, committed the fatal strategic folly of *dividing* these forces in half, by sending Cervera's squadron to Cuba. If Americans smile at this error in sending one-half to meet the enemy's whole number, they will do well to remember that the American Atlantic fleet, at a critical moment, was itself divided, and the flying squadron kept at Hampton Roads, instead of joining Sampson at Key West; that this was done only by reason of political pressure brought to bear by the panic-stricken inhabitants along the New England coast, who were obsessed by a groundless fear of bombardment. Such bombardment would have been merely a waste of Spanish ammunition, and would have served no military purpose, until the Spaniards should gain control of the sea. Americans should also remember the basic cause of this clamor—the weakness of our coast defences.

4. Cervera entered Santiago, the most weakly defended and the weakest strategical port of Cuba, instead of entering Havana, the strongest port, surrounded by railway communications and held by the main body of the Spanish army of occupation. There is not space here to discuss his reasons for this move, but it should be stated that, under the actual circumstances, when Cervera left Curaçao, there was no American force to obstruct his entry of Cienfuegos—connected with Havana by rail—and as for Havana, Cervera had two excellent opportunities to reach that strategic heart of Cuba. That he did not know of these opportunities was fortunate for the United States.

5. The coast defences of Santiago were not worthy of the name. Hence, the guns of Cervera's ships were the mainstay of the city's artillery defence, against both sea and land attacks. While Cervera remained in Santiago harbor, no American army could do more than besiege the place; even had they taken it, it would have been untenable. But once Cervera had left, and his inferior squadron was destroyed by Sampson, the war was over, so far as the Spanish army in Cuba was concerned. They could not, hopelessly blockaded, fire one shot to any ultimate purpose.

6. The next factor is the reason why Cervera did not stay in Santiago. The reason, primarily, was this: There was no railroad from Havana to Santiago. Supplies for the isolated army of

Linares at Santiago ran short; the longer Cervera's sailors consumed these supplies, the nearer was Linares' army to starvation. Another reason was the demand of the Spanish people for a sea-fight, to vindicate Spanish honor.

7. The defensive campaign of the large Spanish army in Cuba was so utterly mismanaged that the campaign was thrown away. Spain had in Cuba 196,820 officers and men, most of whom (155,302) were regulars. In the province of Santiago there were 36,582, not counting 1,200 marines and sailors landed from Cervera's squadron—37,782 in all. Why this 37,782 were not heavily reinforced by General Blanco from Havana and other provinces must always remain a question difficult to answer. The lack of railroad communications is no reply, since Blanco, by prompt action, could have made up for this inconvenience; the march of Escario's column from Manzanillo to Santiago proves this and indicates as well the ineffectual resistance of the Cuban insurgents.

General Shafter naturally supposed that he would face superior forces around Santiago, in any event. He had under his command 16,887 officers and men to Linares' 37,782. Without Spanish reinforcements, here were more than odds of one to two. But Linares did his full share in throwing away the campaign, *for he did not concentrate his forces*. On the eve of battle, he had only 9,430 troops in and about Santiago, and these were scattered into small groups, according to the fatal "trocha" system of the Spaniards. *Actually engaged*, on July 1, at San Juan Hill and San Juan Heights, there were only 1,717 Spaniards to meet the onslaught of 8,412 Americans, who were reinforced by the following morning to a total first line of 13,500, when Bates' and Lawton's brigades arrived after El Caney.

Even then, the American army was in a precarious position, but the aspect of every problem was changed when Cervera made his fatal sortie, on July 3, the next day. Santiago was then doomed, whether or not an enemy's force threatened it. As Cervera said, "The war was the squadron."

Those who desire to verify these brief statements, and to study the whole campaign of Santiago de Cuba, on sea and ashore, should read the three volumes on this subject by Major Herbert H. Sargent, U. S. Army.

There are many "Lessons of the War with Spain," admirably discussed by Mahan in his book on the whole war which bears that significant title.

The war found us "with the smallest regular army, in proportion to population, that we have had at the beginning of any of our wars. It consisted of but 2,143 officers and 26,040 enlisted men, or *less than four hundredths of one per cent.* of our estimated population." (Captain Rhodes, U.S. Army.)

Says Sargent (Vol. I, page 105):

That the Spanish commander [Linares] should not have brought on these two battlefields [San Juan and El Caney] an aggregate force of soldiers numbering more than one to every hundred in the island, seems marvelous. That General Shafter's army should not, under so many unfavorable conditions, have been defeated, crushed, captured, or annihilated, seems hardly short of the miraculous. When it is remembered that in this campaign the United States won a glorious victory far-reaching in its results, *in spite of a lack of proper and timely preparation*, in spite of the small size of the invading army and the overwhelming numbers of the enemy, in spite of the tropical rains, the withering heat, the deadly fevers, and the desperate resistance offered by the Spaniards on the battlefield, one is almost tempted to exclaim with Bismarck that "God always looks after the fools and—and the United States." Had Shafter's army been destroyed, the United States would have had remaining only a handful of trained soldiers with which to prosecute the war in Cuba. Out of 25 regiments of infantry in the regular army, 18 had sailed in General Shafter's expedition. Out of 10 regiments of cavalry the greater part of six had sailed; and out of seven regiments of artillery, two of which had not been organized, the batteries of three had sailed. And, besides, the greater part of three regiments of regular infantry and four batteries of regular artillery had sailed for the Philippines. It can be readily seen that with the regular army eliminated, the prosecution of the campaign in Cuba to a successful conclusion would have cost the American people a frightful amount of blood and treasure. Undoubtedly the volunteers would in time have conquered the Spaniards in the island; but having been only recently organized, and having no experience in campaigning, no instruction in how to care for themselves in the tropics, no practice in target shooting, and few opportunities for acquiring proficiency in drill and military maneuvers, they would not have been in proper condition to begin a campaign until autumn, and even then they would have had to undergo many hardships, suffer great mortality, perhaps a number of defeats, in acquiring that discipline and proficiency necessary to win victories against trained troops. *In this connection it may be noted that soldiers cannot be made in a day, and that their training is more important now than ever before.* (Written in 1907.)

It is fortunate that the United States met a weak naval power in 1898. Out of 2,362 pieces of coast defence ordnance "contemplated" in 1885, only 151 were in position on April 1, 1898. The total coast defence ammunition on hand was 12 rounds for each 8-inch gun, 20 rounds for each 10-inch gun, 15 rounds for each 12-inch gun, and 10 rounds for each mortar. This was "not enough to put in a hat." We were deficient in small arms and in smokeless powder. Of Krag-Jorgensen rifles, including those

already in the hands of the regular soldiers, there were only 53,508 and 14,895 carbines. This supply, however, was barely sufficient to meet the requirements of the increased regular army. Nothing was left for the volunteers except the out-of-date Springfield rifle, of which there were 265,895. For these weapons, there was *no smokeless powder ammunition, and none was immediately available*—the government did not manufacture the article.

After these facts and many others are mentioned, there are still many Americans who point to our undeserved success in the War with Spain, and say, "We won. That is enough." Let them face, then, the most eloquent facts of all. The American people had so ordained, through their Congress, that the regular army in 1898 should be exceedingly small, and that, being small, its proportion of *medical officers* was small. There were only 192 medical officers *allowed* by Congress, and, actually, 179 commissioned and ready for service. For a *tropical* campaign, especially, but also for *any* campaign, 179 medical officers were a mere pittance. A mere pittance, too, was the hospital corps—723 men. What was the result? The following figures, nerve-racking to any person of sense and imagination, show the result:

During the war, the number of volunteers enlisted was 223,235. The vast majority of these volunteers never left the United States. Only 289 were killed or died of wounds received in action, but 3,848 died of disease, and of this number, over one half died *in camp*, in the United States. *Fourteen* men died from disease to every man killed in battle. Deaths from disease among the regulars were much less, in proportion to battle casualties, than among the volunteers. In the Army as a whole, from May 1, 1898, to June 30, 1899, deaths *from all causes* numbered 6,619—an annual rate of 33.03 per thousand of mean strength. The corresponding annual rate of deaths from disease was 25.68.\*

### GENERAL SUMMARY

To sum up the main factors of our success in the wars of the short period of American military history, from 1776 to 1898, the following table will indicate the conclusions that may be formed from a study of the records; we won owing mainly to the following factors:

1. Direct assistance of a foreign power (France, 1781).
2. Indirect assistance, or counterpoise of a foreign power (France, 1812-1814).
3. Hopeless inferiority of the enemy (Mexico, 1846-1847).

\*Report of War Dept., 1899, Vol. I, Part I, page 23.

4. Inferiority of the enemy at sea, combined with gross mismanagement of sea and land campaigns (Spain, 1898).

5. Influence of sea power, as distinguished from co-ordinate land power; crippling of the enemy by blockade (Mexico, 1846-1847; Civil War, Confederacy, 1861-1865; Spanish War, Cuba, 1898).

6. Influence of sea power in destroying the enemy's commerce, with or without command of the sea (Revolution, 1776-1782; War of 1812, principal factor; Civil War, 1861-1865).

7. Influence of sea power in naval battles of decisive importance. (Lake Erie, 1813, saved the great West; Lake Champlain, 1813, saved the Great Lakes and territory south of them; Manila Bay and Santiago, 1898, won control of the sea. To this should be added de Grasse's victory over Graves, in 1781, off Cape Henry, which lost to Great Britain her American colonies, by making possible the capture of Cornwallis at Yorktown).

8. The geographical isolation of the United State (It cannot be emphasized too strongly that this factor of our successes in the past can no longer be counted on).

#### "MUDDLING THROUGH"

The phrase "muddling through" has been used by the British to a certain extent to criticise the way in which Great Britain has conducted her wars in the past, and, in particular, to criticise the management of the present great European War by the British Government. If Englishmen choose to use this term when speaking of errors or shortcomings of their own, whether of military policy or of the conduct of campaigns, their right to do so is their own concern. The only comment of Americans, except impertinent criticism, would reasonably be this: that Great Britain alone, among all the belligerents now involved, entered the war with a military policy very similar to the American military policy. In other words, Great Britain, among the nations of Europe, was the only nation whose military policy had been based ultimately on voluntary rather than compulsory training and service.

In view of this very close similarity between British and American military policies, and, more especially, in view of the facts of American military history, it would seem evident that Americans cannot *gracefully* accuse the British of "muddling through" the present war. Whether the British have muddled through or

not is another question, but the main point is that the American people have "muddled through" *all* their wars. Once they appreciate this ugly fact, they will think twice before they speak of British "muddling." They may even come to understand that the British originated this criticism about themselves, and that there is a large measure of hope for a people who see their own faults, and who have, therefore, no blind spot.

#### AMERICAN PACIFISTS

If the national defect of vision concerning military affairs which afflicts Americans may be termed the blind spot, the *total* defect of vision which afflicts the "pacifists" may be called the purblind spot. Those who are besotted with this extraordinary mental twist have brought forward the following argument:

"Preparedness for war causes war." Stripped of non-essentials, this is their creed.

The reply to their argument is found in American history. We have never been thoroughly prepared for war except at one brief period—immediately after the Civil War. In 1865 the United States maintained in the field a *conscript* army of over 1,000,000 veterans, by all odds, at that time, *the most powerful army* in the world. In 1865, the United States maintained an immense navy, a navy mainly of ironclads, which was by all odds *the most powerful navy* in the world.

Shortly after the Civil War, the United States was involved in *two* most serious controversies, one with Great Britain and the other with France, the two *most powerful* of foreign powers. The United States Government *demand*ed that Great Britain agree to settle the *Alabama* Claims. Great Britain agreed; there was no war about it. The United States Government *demand*ed that France withdraw her troops from Mexico. France withdrew her troops from Mexico; there was no war about it. In other words, at the only period of our history when we were thoroughly prepared for war, when our army and navy both were the most formidable in the world, the United States forced two great foreign nations to accede to its terms on two grave questions affecting our rights, *and entered upon the longest period of peace we have ever enjoyed*, a period of 33 years. This peace of 33 years, following our one period of preparedness, should be contrasted with the wars we have waged when we were in our "normal" state of *un-preparedness*.

## THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD COMPULSORY TRAINING

Most Americans, disagreeing with Abraham Lincoln and with the mature conclusions of Thomas Jefferson, appear to have an antipathy toward compulsory service in war on the one hand, and compulsory training in time of peace on the other. They demand protection as an inherent right, but they seem not to regard service as a duty equally inherent. They seem not to remember the existence of a statute which places every able-bodied citizen between the ages of 18 and 45 in the *unorganized* militia, subject to call by the President (Revised Statutes, Sec. 1625; Sec. 1642). Of what use is this statute, if the unorganized militia continue to be unorganized? Of what use is any force, unless it be organized, and under the complete control of the federal government?

The antipathy to universal or compulsory training is expressed in the form of three main arguments:

1. It is "undemocratic."
2. It hinders the economic development of a country.
3. It is not necessary for the United States.

1. No intelligent human being "cares a brass pin whether this thing or that be 'democratic' or not, provided it be wise, sound and useful," or imperative to safety. Aside from this consideration, the *burden of proof* that it is undemocratic falls upon those who make the assertion. For the assertion is made in the very teeth of the indisputable fact that the democracy of France, the democracy of Switzerland, and the super-democracy of Australia see to it that every able-bodied male citizen is prepared for military duty, and equipped for that duty. The assertion is also made against the views of the two greatest democrats known in American history, Lincoln and Jefferson. It is fair to ask whether or not Jefferson was a true democrat. If he was, then it follows that his doctrine of compulsory training and service is democratic.

2. The second argument is that it hinders the economic development of a country. Germany's growth in business, manufactures, and trade is a sufficient answer to that argument, knocking it into a "cocked hat." But there are further answers. Would it be an economic waste to give our citizens physical training? Would it be an economic waste to give them a sundering of class distinctions? Would it be an economic waste to give them in far larger measure the sense of duty, the sense of nationality, and the sense of discipline? Would it be an economic waste to prevent war, or

to prevent disaster in war? Of what moment, compared with these values, is the temporary removal of 100,000 or more men each year—different men each year—from their business pursuits? The ranks of the unemployed alone far outnumber, by many thousands, the numbers that would be “called to the colors” each year. “Called to the colors!” The phrase is worth millions in self-respect.

3. The third argument is that it is not necessary for the United States. American military history and the experiences of Great Britain in the present war are a sufficient answer to that argument. But the answers do not stop here; they are not concerned with war alone:

(a) The need of physical training for Americans of many classes, rich and poor. Of every 100 volunteers in 1898, at least 50 were found to be physically unfit for military service. Of every 50 accepted, at least 25 were unable to stand the rigors of campaigning.

(b) The need of discipline for Americans of all classes. There are many indications that respect for authority might well be increased in the United States. Efficiency experts find this fault the hardest to remedy; it is seen in violence, arson, and murder during strikes; it is painfully noticeable in constant lynchings.

(c) The need for democratic fellowship which shall bring together all degrees of wealth and poverty, education and ignorance, class that employs and class that labors; which shall bring out of prejudice and sectional misunderstanding the East and the West, the North and the South. What else but military service would take the “man in the limousine” and the “man on the steam shovel,” bring them together, and make them understand each other? (To the benefit of both.)

(d) The need of overcoming a tendency to “softness” which is becoming a grave symptom of national decadence; the need of restoring *American militancy*.

(e) The need of American thought, that Americans shall have something to worship and work for; that they shall cease to think so much of *money*, and think more of their *duties to the nation*.

The foregoing article, in so far as it assumes to be a prediction, is based upon the intelligence of the American people. No nation



